

VZCZCXYZ0003
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHMD #1923/01 2121102
ZNY CCCCC ZZH (CCY - AD01E7A1 MSI1137 506A)
P 311102Z JUL 06
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0394
INFO RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 3892
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY 4973
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 0967
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ AUG 1189
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 5959
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 0519
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0184COR,,
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0130

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 001923

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - CLASSIFICATION REASON ADDED

SIPDIS

FOR EUR/WE, NEA, AF

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/28/2016
TAGS: [OTRA](#) [SP](#)
SUBJECT: SPAIN: AMBASSADOR'S JULY 27 MEETING WITH FM
MORATINOS

REF: A. MADRID 1834
[1](#)B. MADRID 189

Classified By: KATHLEEN FITZPATRICK, ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION,
FOR REASONS 1.4 b and d

[1](#)1. (C//NF) Summary: Ambassador Aguirre had a wide ranging discussion with Spanish Foreign Minister Moratinos on July 27, the day after Moratinos, return from the Lebanon Core Group meeting in Rome. Moratinos was very pleased with his treatment by the Secretary during the meeting and especially grateful the US did not pose obstacles to his attendance. The Ambassador and Moratinos identified a number of areas in which Spain desired to help in the global agenda, including in Iraq, Latin America, North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. Moratinos said Spain would be willing to contribute troops to a Lebanon stabilization force; however, though he did not state this to the Ambassador, both he and Spanish Vice President Fernandez de la Vega have made clear the force would have to be under UN mandate (Comment: Embassy believes that while Moratinos may want Spain to contribute, the government will have to work this issue carefully through their political process, and this will be affected by events such as the Qana attacks). Ambassador Aguirre told Moratinos that President Zapatero's comments on Israel and Iraq were unhelpful and unwelcome.
End summary

//Lebanon//

[1](#)2. (C//NF) Spanish FM Moratinos expressed to Ambassador Aguirre his delight with the treatment he had received from Secretary Rice during the Lebanon Core Group meeting in Rome and was especially appreciative of US willingness to include him in the meeting, after rejection of a similar request last year. Moratinos felt he was able to assist the Secretary in crafting the final statement of the conference. Moratinos said that the meeting was not the failure that the press had made it out to be. He said Spain would be willing to participate in an international stabilization force, perhaps

with a battalion of troops. Moratinos had spoken with Defense Minister Alonso, who, though reluctant because of the possible risks involved to Spanish soldiers had agreed Spain should participate (NOTE: Moratinos did not insist as he had in public commentary, that Spanish participation depended on the force coming under UN or some other international auspices but this has since been made clear by Spain's Vice President. We believe that while Moratinos would like Spain to contribute to the force, the government will have to tread carefully with a skittish Spanish public, particularly after the Qana attacks.)

//Israel/Zapatero comments//

13. (C//NF) Moratinos acknowledged that relations with Israel had become tense over President Zapatero,s comments on the Lebanon situation. Moratinos had thought he had smoothed things over in conversations with the Israeli Ambassador to Spain, and with senior Israeli officials. However, that remarks by Socialist Party organization Secretary Jose Blanco that Israel was deliberately targeting civilians had set this process back.

14. (C//NF) Ambassador Aguirre said that Zapatero,s comments linking the situation in Lebanon to the intervention in Iraq were unhelpful and unwelcome. The Ambassador told Moratinos that he had heard from Defense Minister Alonso and others that the comments were aimed at the domestic audience, specifically to criticize the previous Aznar government for having put Spanish troops into Iraq. The Ambassador said if that is the case, this was not evident, because Zapatero,s comments reflected a &shotgun8 approach that sprayed on the US relationship. If he is aiming at his own audience, he should target his remarks as such and leave the US and our role in Iraq out of his domestic political commentary. Moratinos took this on board. The Ambassador also said that he was in regular contact with the Israeli Ambassador Viktor Harel, who was out alone on a limb in the public environment in Spain. The Ambassador said he was working with Harel to shore him up publicly, perhaps at a public event where they both could be photographed together.

15. (C//NF) Moratinos offered his assessment of Syria and Iran, saying that the Iranian regime is &unsalvageable,8 but that he believes there remain opportunities to bring the Syrian regime around. That has been the idea behind his contacts with the Syrian Information Minister, who had served as Syria,s Ambassador to Spain.

//Latin America//

16. (C//NF) Moratinos and Ambassador Aguirre also reviewed several Latin America issues. Moratinos said he thought that the situation had eased somewhat in the region with the elections of Alan Garcia in Peru and Calderon in Mexico, moving away from populist trends. Moratinos said the situation had improved somewhat for Spanish companies such as Repsol in Bolivia. On Venezuela, Moratinos, noted Chavez, unhelpful visit to Belarus, which he hoped would clearly show his erstwhile supporters that he is not a reliable figure.

17. (C//NF) Ambassador Aguirre raised Cuba, noting that a recent article in Spain,s leading daily El Pais, considered to be reflective of the Socialist government views, had a detailed article about Spanish views on an eventual transition to Cuba that was at odds with what Moratinos and senior leaders had conveyed to the USG (see REF A). The article quotes unnamed mid-level Spanish Foreign Ministry sources as saying that Spain would support a transition to democracy that included figures such as Raul Casto or FM Perez Roque. Moratinos was unfamiliar with the article but said that on the issue of GOS thinking on transition, it was inaccurate. Spain believes the transition to democracy will resemble Spain,s own transition 30 years ago, and will involve figures in the current government who will help provide stability as democracy takes hold. But, Moratinos said, Spain has not identified Raul or Perez Roque as those

figures. Ambassador Aguirre underscored the importance for the US and Spain of having a clear and precise understanding of each other's policies, and if there are true differences, we need to discuss those and make certain that these differences are being handled in such a way as not to affect the entire relationship. Ambassador said we could be faced with a transition in Cuba at any time and the US and Spain should understand whether we are in agreement or not before faced with events on the ground in Cuba.

//Arranging Shannon-Leon Discussions and US-Spain Latin America Working Group Meeting//

¶18. (C//NF) Ambassador Aguirre noted the need to organize discussions between A/S Shannon and Bernardino Leon to respond to the Secretary's and Moratinos, tasking following their meeting to identify specific countries/projects for US-Spain cooperation in Latin America. He said we were trying to arrange a meeting between Leon and Shannon on the margins of the inauguration ceremonies in Bogota. The Ambassador also pressed for a larger meeting of the US-Spain Latin-America working group on the margins of UNGA in New York. He said we are working with Spanish and US counterparts to determine if a meeting can be held when the Spanish team is in New York, approximately between Sept. 17-23. Moratinos said that his Latin America team would be there during that time frame and meeting could be organized. He will arrive a little later because he would be in London Sept. 18 signing a Gibraltar agreement.

//Iraq/Basrah hospital contribution//

¶19. (C//NF) The Ambassador thanked Moratinos for Spain's willingness to contribute approximately \$22 million to the Basrah children's hospital in Iraq. He handed him a copy of a letter of appreciation from the First Lady. Moratinos said that President Zapatero was personally committed to the project and it has Spain's full commitment. Moratinos, however, that depositing the funds by Sept. 1 as we requested would be extremely difficult, if not impossible for the GOS, which has to rearrange budgets and priorities in order to assemble the money. This will take time, and he asked for our understanding. (Subsequently, Moratinos, chief of staff told us that Moratinos was pressuring the &system8 to come up with the contribution quickly because of the full political commitment of the government of Spain. Nonetheless, the final appropriation probably will not be able to be made until much later this year.)

//GOS desire for DAS and expert-level discussions on Western Sahara and North Africa//

¶10. (C//NF) Both Moratinos and the Ambassador agreed that we should start now to prepare solid substance and outcomes for the Secretary's visit to Madrid, including on Latin America and the Basrah hospital but also in other areas. In this connection. MFA Director General Alvaro Iranzo said that he would very much like to organize consultations with the US at the experts level on Western Sahara and on broader North Africa issues. He was awaiting a reply to his letter to A/S Welch inviting him to come to Spain (Iranzo said he had a brief conversation with Welch in Rome and reminded him of the letter). Iranzo said the he understood that A/S Welch likely could not visit Spain, but he asked that we help arrange discussions at the NEA DAS level with NEA Maghreb experts to meet with Iranzo and his North Africa team. Iranzo said the discussions could take place in Washington, in New York on the margins of UNGA or in Madrid, whichever works best for the US side. Ambassador Aguirre undertook to put forward this suggestion to the NEA bureau, underscoring his support for the idea. Iranzo said this proposal was separate for ideas Spain had put forward on a meeting of a multinational &Group of Friends8 but rather was aimed bilaterally so the US and Spain could share views and anticipate key developments. He hoped this meeting could take place before the October UNSC discussions on MINURSO extension.

(C//NF) (Embassy Comment: We are in e-mail contact with NEA counterparts about responding to Iranzo,s letter and to his idea of a working group meeting. Ambassador Aguirre recommends we respond positively to the working group idea, so that we understand better the policies and role of one of the key actors in the area and find ways to work more concertedly with Spain on key North Africa issues such as counter-terrorism. This is also part of our broader effort to enlist Spain in supporting our global agenda where our interests and challenges coincide. While Spain,s focus is more on Western Sahara, and the issue should be a separate agenda item for the discussions, we could use the opportunity to identify broader issues and opportunities for cooperation in the Maghreb region as a second piece of the discussions.)

//US-Spain Africa cooperation//

¶11. (C//NF) Iranzo also noted the exchange of letters between the Secretary and Moratinos and the Deputy Secretary and Spanish Deputy FM Bernardino Leon on ways to cooperate in sub-Saharan Africa, now a key focus for Spain because of the influx of immigrants from that region. He had invited A/S Frazier to Spain to discuss specifics, and noted that a good opportunity for her to visit would be in November at a conference in the Canary Islands (where the sub-Saharan immigrants first enter Spain) for the inauguration of Spain's "Casa Africa," to include African union and African government representatives. Ambassador agreed that the many challenges in Africa offer ripe opportunities for the US and Spain to work together, and again undertook to lend his support for discussions with the African bureau on this issue (NOTE: Embassy Madrid has been active in encouraging Spain to look for ways to work with us on our global agenda, including specifically in sub-Saharan Africa where Spain has just launched its own "Plan Africa" to increase Spanish presence and development and other assistance to help stem the immigrant flow into Spain.)

//Gibraltar: US nuclear sub visit//

¶12. (C//NF) At the close of the meeting, Ambassador Aguirre noted that he had taken a phone call from Spanish MFA Director General for North America and Europe Jose Pons, who said he was calling on behalf of Minister Moratinos to express concern about a July 29 US nuclear submarine port visit to Gibraltar (ref B). Pons had asked why the ship could not dock at the base at Rota, Spain instead, which the Spanish would prefer. Moratinos was unaware of this specific ship visit, and was brought up to speed at the meeting by his chief of staff. However, Moratinos underscored the sensitivity of Gibraltar for Spain and in particular the nuclear ship visit issue, especially since the disastrous visit of the UK ship the Tireless whose nuclear plant had to be repaired port side. Moratinos said these visits engendered protests from Green parties and others. Ambassador Aguirre explained that the current visit was not a signal either to Spain or to the UK, and that it was a port visit only, with no operational component and no repairs scheduled. The Ambassador told Morationos he had discussed the visit with NAVEUR who explained that the ship could not be diverted to Rota at this time because the families of ship personnel were already on their way to Gibraltar. The Ambassador told Morationos this visit will go forward. (Embassy Comment: Per ref B, Ambassador Aguirre would like to work out with our navy and others a more appropriate protocol with NAVEUR, Embassy London and other appropriate authorities so that Embassy Madrid could provide its views in advance of Gibraltar ship visit decision on timing and other possible concerns that could arise that affect US interests in Spain).
AGUIRRE